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Andamans A22

[Information on the regional divisions of the Indian sub-continent will be found in Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

619 The natives of the Great Andaman Group are divided into tribes, of which there are ten, each with its own distinctive language or dialect, and with a name. The following is a list of these tribes, passing from north to south:—*Aka-Cari*, *Aka-Kora*, *Aka-Bo*, *Aka-Jeru*, *Aka-Kede*, *Aka-Kol*, *Ok-Juwai*, *A-Pučikwar*, *Akar-Bale*, and *Aka-Bea*. In each case the name is given in the form in which it is used by the tribe itself. Thus the *Aka-Bea* speak of the *A-Pučikwar* as *Aka-Bojig-yab*, and refer to the *Akar-Bale* as *Aka-Bala-wa*, and there are similar variants of other tribal names.

• 101 The natives of the Little Andaman refer to themselves as *Ōnge* (men). It is probable that the so-called *Jarawa* of the South Andaman have the same word. In a vocabulary obtained by Colebrooke in 1790 from a *Jarawa* near Port Blair, the word *Mincopie* is given as meaning a native of the Andaman Islands. This would seem to be simply the same phrase as the Little Andaman *M'ōnge-bi* = I am *Ōnge*, or I am a "man." The word *Jarawa* is apparently derived from the *Aka-Bea* language, but is now used by all the friendly natives (i.e. the natives of the Great Andaman Group) to denote those of the Little Andaman Group. In the official publications dealing with the Andamans, however, the term *Jarawa* has come to be applied solely to the hostile natives of the Great Andaman. It is in this sense that the word is used in the present work, the name *Ōnge* being reserved for the natives of the Little Andaman. It must be remembered, however, that the so-called *Jarawa* probably call themselves *Ōnge*, while the *Ōnge* of the Little Andaman are called *Jarawa* by the natives of the friendly tribes of the Great Andaman. The name *Mincopie* was at one time common in ethnological literature as a term for the Andaman Islanders.

619 It is convenient to divide the tribes of the Great Andaman Group into two subdivisions, to be spoken of as the Northern Group (including the first four tribes mentioned above) and the Southern Group (including the other six tribes). Between these two divisions there are a number of differences of culture. They have, for example, different forms of bow, and different kinds of baskets. The differences between them are much slighter than those between the Great Andaman tribes and

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immediate neighbours the *bō'jig-ngī'ji*, and we have every reason¹ to believe that crews of vessels shipwrecked on any portion of the Great Andaman coast would not only escape molestation and attack, but would receive such assistance as it might be in the power of these savages to render. That their animosity in past years was not unfounded is attested by the reports of Captain Miller and Père Barbe, both of which will be found quoted at some length in the "Journal of the Anthropological Institute" for 1882-3, p. 339.²

On referring to the accompanying map of the Andamans³ it will be seen that according to our present knowledge⁴ the aboriginal inhabitants are divided into no less than nine tribes, viz.:

<i>bō'jig-ngī'ji</i>	..	South Andaman.
<i>bal'awa</i> ..	..	Archipelago.
<i>bō'jig-yāb-</i>	}	.. Middle Andaman.
<i>ā-ko-jū'wai-</i>		
<i>ā-kā-ked'e-</i>		
<i>ā-kā-kōl-</i>		
<i>ā-kā-jāro-</i>		
<i>ā-kā-chā'riar-</i>	}	.. North Andaman.
<i>jār'awa</i> ..		
	..	Inhabiting Little Andaman and southern portions of Great Andaman. ⁵

Although the *bō'jig-ngī'ji* are here shown, and in the following pages are described, as the natives of South Andaman—including Rutland and Labyrinth Island—there is no evidence to prove that they have ever been in undisputed possession of the whole of this territory; indeed, the scattered encampments of *jār'awa*, which are marked on the map as occupying certain portions within their territory give substance to the belief that before our advent they suffered from the inroads of their marauding neighbours, whose occupancy is proved to be of no recent date by the *jār'awa* kitchen-middens,⁵ evidently of

¹ Vide Part III, "Trade, &c.," p. 119.

² How erroneous were the views formerly held may be gathered from the following extracts:—"The Andamans . . . do not even exist in a state of tribedom" (Figuier). "They have no tribal distinctions" (Wood). "In Great Andaman there is only one tribe" (Mouat).

³ These are the names by which they are designated by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji*, who, being our immediate neighbours, are the best known of all the tribes.

⁴ As these communities possess many, if not all, the characteristics of the inhabitants of Little Andaman, and are presumed to have had constant communication with them in past years, they are designated by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji* by the name of *jār'awa*.

⁵ These are distinguished from those of the *bō'jig-ngī'ji* with readiness by members of the latter tribe, on account of the presence of the valves of certain molluscs, which they assert were never (according to tradition) considered as articles of diet by their own immediate ancestors.

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619 remote origin, which are found in and near the harbour of Port Blair.

197 No one who has had the opportunity of seeing the natives of the various islands forming Great Andaman can fail to be struck with the similarity which marks their general appearance,¹ and to be convinced that, however much they may differ in many respects, they must at least claim a common origin. Any reasonable doubt on the subject has been removed by the discovery that although each of the several tribes possesses a distinct dialect, these are traceable to the same source, and are all in the same—i.e., the agglutinative—stage of development; further, it has been ascertained that among all, or at least among the natives of Middle and South Andaman and the Archipelago, a coincidence of legends and customs is to be found, and that though the points of dissimilarity between the inhabitants of Great and Little Andaman are more marked, especially in regard to their weapons and implements, they are by no means such as would justify the belief that the latter are descendants of another branch of the Negrito family.

From what has been already said it will be understood that we are not yet in a position to decide whether one and the same dialect is spoken by all the communities designated as *jār-awa-*, or whether, like the people of North and Middle Andaman, they must be regarded on linguistic grounds as representing two or more tribes.

The dialects of Great Andaman may be grouped into three classes, viz. :—

- I. The *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* and *bal'awa-*.
- II. The *bō'jig-yāb-* and *ā'kā-kōl-* and *ō'ko-jū'wai-*.
- III. The *ā'kā-ked'e-* and the two tribes of North Andaman.

But it must not be supposed that the similarity between the dialect of any of these groups is so great that a knowledge of one would enable a person to converse intelligibly with members of the other tribes in the same classification, for such is not the case; now, however, that intercommunication is less restricted it is not unusual to find that members of the various communities are sufficiently acquainted with the dialect spoken by their immediate neighbours as to hold intercourse with them.

172 Little which throws light on their past history can be gathered from the Andamanese or from their traditions; but from a study

¹ I have been told by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* that they can distinguish a *bal'awa-* from members of the other tribes by his high cheek-bones, and the shape of his skull, which they describe as more dolichocephalic than those of other tribesmen; but as this tribe is now well-nigh extinct, it is impossible to determine the amount of credence which may be placed on this strange statement.

●101 In the records of certain Arabian travellers of the ninth century we appear to find the first mention that is made of these islands being inhabited by negritos, and Marco Polo, some four hundred years later, bears out their statement, while it would seem that the islands themselves were known to Ptolemy, who speaks of a group in the Bay of Bengal as *Insulae bonae fortunae*.

As regards the derivation of the name "Andaman," there seems to be some uncertainty. Colonel Yule, in his well known work on Marco Polo, mentions that, to his knowledge, Nicolo Conti, who calls it the "Island of Gold," is the only person who has attempted to give it a meaning. Colonel Yule's suggestion is that Angamanain (the name used by Marco Polo) is an Arabic (oblique) dual indicating "The Two Andamans," viz., The Great and The Little, while the origin of the name (Angaman) may be traced to Ptolemy's reference to these islands, which he describes as those of *Good Fortune*, Ἀγαθὸν δαίμονος, whence may have sprung the forms Agdaman, Angaman, and ultimately Andaman.

144 With regard to the origin of the race, many conflicting opinions have, from time to time, been entertained; but, from the knowledge we now possess, the questions raised on the following points may, I think, be considered as more or less satisfactorily set at rest, viz.:—

I. That they are Negritos, *not* Papuans.¹

II. That they are the original inhabitants, whose occupancy dates from pre-historic times; and that racial affinity—if there be any—may possibly some day be found to exist between them and the Semangs of the Malayan Peninsula,² or the Aetas of the Philippine Islands.³

III. That all the tribes, as at present known to us, undoubtedly belong to the same race, and are of unmixed origin, the differences which occur among them being attributable as much to their constitutional peculiarities of jealousy and distrust in all dealings with strangers as to the natural barriers

¹ Figuier speaks of them as "pure Papuans, whose isolated position has kept them from intermixture with other races."

² *I*de Wallace's "Malay Archipelago," 2nd Ed., vol. ii, pp. 278-79, and "Journ. Indian Archipelago," vol. iv, p. 427.

³ If similarity of moral and social characteristics afforded a sufficient basis in ethnological researches among races not otherwise widely distinguished, a theory of affinity between the extinct negroid race of Tasmanians and the Andamanese might be regarded as not altogether untenable, for the descriptions given of the former by some writers are found applicable in many particulars to the race under consideration; notably is this the case in the account given by Mr. J. E. Calder, which I have deemed of sufficient interest in this connection to make a somewhat lengthy extract, and this will form the subject of one of the Appendices. (*I*de Appendix D.)

presented by their densely wooded and hilly country, which facts have combined to isolate the various communities, and to check freedom of intercourse among them; further, in the case of Little Andaman, it may fairly be assumed that the peculiar bee-hive form of their huts, as well as certain modifications of their domestic habits and customs, have been borrowed from their neighbours, the Car Nicobarese, upon whom, in the last century, they made some hostile raids. 144 [177]

IV. That, in spite of all our endeavours to protect them, contact with civilisation has been marked with the usual lamentable result of reducing the aboriginal population; indeed, the death-rate, among those within the area of our influence, during the past twenty years has so far exceeded the birth-rate, as to compel the belief that before many decades have passed, the race, at least that portion of it which inhabits Great Andaman, will be well-nigh extinct. 165

In view of their probable early extermination, and the rapidity with which they are being meantime reduced to the standard of civilised manners, it seems very desirable that, ere it be too late, all possible information respecting their habits, customs, physical characteristics, etc., should be obtained, more especially as many of the errors which, excusably enough, found their way into the early accounts, having been allowed to pass unchallenged, are accepted as trustworthy, and false ethnological theories are built on these most imperfect bases.

Almost all accounts which have been written regarding these islanders speak of them as *Mincopies*, in explanation of which it is asserted that it is thus "these people style themselves;" but this is far from being the case, for not only is the name, or any at all resembling it, unknown to the *bōjig-nyījī*,¹ i.e., the inhabitants of South Andaman, but the other six tribes with which we are acquainted are in a like state of ignorance as to its origin and significance. The only sounds at all approximating it in the South Andaman dialect at the present day being *min kaich!* (come here!) and *kāmin kāpi!* (stand here!). The former of these being in common use may have given rise to the term (*Mincopie*) as a nickname, to which, indeed, it may possibly have borne a more striking similarity of sound in the language spoken at the period when this name was first adopted; for each generation cannot fail to produce changes more remarkable, and even of greater importance in the phonology of an unwritten language, such as this, depending as 101 ●

¹ For the list of symbols adopted for denoting the sounds in this language see Appendix A; this list has been finally adopted in accordance with the kind advice of Mr. A. J. Ellis, F.R.S., whose valuable assistance I would here again gratefully acknowledge.

4 E. H. MAN.—*On the Aboriginal Inhabitants*

- 10 it must entirely on the delicacy of ear, and correctness of individual articulation.

The following remarks, except where otherwise specified, must be understood as referring to the eight tribes of Great Andaman, for the continued and inveterate hostility with which the inhabitants of Little Andaman, known as *jārawa*, have hitherto met all our advances and attempts to establish an *entente cordiale* has rendered it extremely difficult to obtain, much less substantiate, any information concerning them.

142 **Form and Size.**—1. Those of my readers who have studied the various accounts which have appeared regarding the physical characteristics of the Andamanese cannot fail to have been struck with their divergence. For the sake of others, however, to whom the race is comparatively unknown, it is necessary that I should here quote, on the subject of their form and size a few writers, commencing with the Mahomedan travellers of the ninth century, already mentioned, who stated that "their complexion is black, their hair frizzled, their countenance and eyes frightful, their feet very large and almost a cubit in length, and they go quite naked;" while Marco Polo (cir. 1285) appears to have been still less favourably impressed, for he says "the people . . . are no better than wild beasts, and I assure you all the men of this island of Angamanain have heads like dogs, and teeth and eyes likewise; in fact, in the face, they are all just like big mastiff dogs!" Next we find Colonel Colebrooke, towards the close of the last century, describing "their limbs as ill-formed and slender, their bellies prominent, and, like the Africans, as having woolly heads, thick lips, and flat noses." In opposition to the foregoing we have Dr. Mouat, than whom no better judge could be desired, giving it as his opinion, that "they are the most perfectly formed little beings in existence. In proportion to their size, their general framework is well constructed, and their limbs present a remarkably good muscular development, and . . . the whole form is as elegant as that of any European," in which opinion he is supported by the eminent craniologist, Dr. J. Barnard Davis, recently deceased, who, after careful study of a number of Andamanese skulls and skeletons, affirmed that they were "most beautifully proportioned."

2. From my own observations I would remark, that though it is quite true that there are found among them individuals whose "abdomens are protuberant," and whose limbs are dispropor-

¹ A peculiarity which I have observed is that the males have in many cases as marked a bend in the small of the back as the females. (Vide figure on the left of group in Plate III, Fig. 1.)

² "From childhood they cram their stomachs with an immense amount of bulky food in a short period, and they do literally 'swell visibly' after their

791 savage tribes,¹ imagine themselves gifted with superior wisdom, and can hardly be blamed if they endeavour to turn their talents to account by imposing a little on the credulity of their neighbours.

101 **Tribal Distribution.**—1. The inhabitants of these islands are
171 divided into at least nine tribes,² linguistically distinguished,
197 even if we reckon as one those communities to which I have
619 already alluded under the title of *jārāwa*-, among whom it is not improbable further divisions and dialects may eventually be discovered. The conjecture that they are one is merely based on the assertions of the people of South Andaman, and on the circumstance that all the weapons, utensils, huts, &c., of the *jārāwa*-, which we have been able to examine, appear to be constructed invariably on the same model, while all such members of the various scattered communities as we have had the opportunity of observing, resemble each other in abstaining from the practice, so general among all the eight Great Andaman tribes, of shaving their heads and tattooing their persons. Still, these outward similarities are manifestly insufficient, affording as they do mere negative evidence, whereas our present knowledge, so tardily acquired, of there being inland communities, called *ērem-tā-ga*-, dwelling in the heart of South and Middle Andaman, who are allied in all respects, save in their mode of life, with the *dryō-to*-, or coast communities of their respective tribes, would seem to justify the belief that hereafter the aborigines of Little Andaman will be found to present not only distinctions of this nature but differences also of dialect, as is the case with the inhabitants of both North and Middle Andaman, which are known to be divided into no less than six tribes.

161 2. As to the numerical strength of these several tribes it is
619 impossible to speak with any degree of certainty, for, as you are aware, there is no part of the country which is not covered with jungle, more or less impenetrable to any but the aborigines themselves, while their capacity for estimating and expressing numbers is wholly inadequate to assist us in forming any conclusions on the subject. The surmise that the entire group contains about 4,000 souls is based on the calculation that the *bō-jig-nyī-jī*-tribe with whom we are most intimate do not at the present day exceed 400, though at the time of our advent in 1858, they are believed to have numbered about 1,000.

133 **Topography.**—1. The chief geographical landmarks of these islands are:—

1st. *Saddle Peak*, a massive hill rising to the height of

¹ Vide Lubbock, "On the Origin of Civilisation," &c., 4th Ed., pp. 250-1.

² For the names of the various tribes, and the localities they occupy, the reader is referred to the accompanying map.

137 occur, sometimes over large tracts, conspicuous in the dry season when the leaves are off the trees. The huge buttressing of several species is a peculiar feature, and so is the growth of the forest in certain parts in belts, dependent apparently on the soil below: e.g., the tracts of the bamboo (*bambusa schizostachyoides*) which almost exclusively occupy the indurated chloritic rock. Abortive *euphorbias*, screw-pines (*pandanus odoratissimus*), and large cycads give on the coasts a remarkable appearance to the forests. Several palms are commonly seen, though the coconut is not indigenous. The general character of the forests is Burmese, with an admixture of Malay types. In the cleared places about Port Blair the grazing appears to be abundant, but is not really so, owing to the action of two destructive weeds: the needle bearing grass (*avena fatua*), which is pretty but not edible by any kind of food animal and being of a stronger growth than ordinary grazing grass supplants it wherever it is not rigorously kept down; and the sensitive plant (*mimosa pudica*), an imported nuisance, which rapidly covers all open and low lying places and is edible only by goats.

IV. HISTORY.

175 Ancient Notices of the Islands.—The existence of the islands now known as the Andamans has, owing to the ancient course of trade, been reported from quite early times, though which of Ptolemy's island names ought properly to be attached to them may still be regarded as a moot point. Gerini, in his ingenious paper, *Notes on the Early Geography of Indo-China*, (*J. B. A. S.* 1897, p. 551ff) gives Bazakata for the Great Andaman, Khaline for the Little Andaman. Maniola for Car Nicobar, and Agathodaimonos for Great Nicobar. In the medieval Latin editions of Ptolemy a remark somewhat as follows often appears opposite Bazakata:—"cuius incolæ vocantur Aginata qui nudi semper degere feruntur, in hac conchæ sunt multa." While it is on Maniola that the people are called *anthropophagi*. Even if one is inclined to accept this plausible theory, it is nevertheless, as will be seen from what follows, probable that Yule is right in his conjecture that Ptolemy's *Agathou daimonos nesos* preserves a misunderstanding, as perhaps does also the contemporary Aginatæ (with its later corruptions Allegate, Alegada on maps) for its inhabitants, of some sailors' term near to the modern Andaman. The old error that Ptolemy's maps were drawn by Agathodæmon, the grammarian of the 5th Century, A.D., is repeated in Portman's *History of our Relations with the Andamanese*, 1899, p. 50 and elsewhere.

Little Andaman, as a name, has a curious and obscure history on the old maps. In some of them we find Isle d'Andemaon (and Andaman) and also Isle de Maon (and Man), as if "Andaman" was the Great Andaman and "Man" the Little Andaman. Then in maps we have Chitre Andaman 1595, 1642: Chique Andemaon 1710: Cite Andemaon 1720, 1720 and Crite I, 1720 obviously corrupted out of Chitre, Chique and Cite. I have seen also Cite d'Andaman responsible for a town or city in the Andamans! And it is just possible that Chique Andemaon is responsible for the modern Cinque Islands between Great and Little Andaman, which are not five but obviously two islands. Chetty Andaman survived till 1858. Little Andaman, in its modern form, does not appear till the maps of Blair in 1790 odd.

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• 101 Origin of the name.—The Chinese and Japanese knew the Islands respectively as Yeng-t'o-mang and Audaban in the first millenium A.D. (*vide* Takakasu's Edition of I-tsing pp. xxx and xxviii ff) which clearly represent the Andaman of the *Arab Relations* of 851 A.D. Then comes Marco Polo with his Arabic dual form Angamanain in 1292. After which we have Nicolo Conti in 1430 with Andemania, and after him almost every eastern traveller and map-maker with some form of "Andaman." All these terms seem obviously to be based on the Malay name for the islands, as the Malays of the Peninsula have, for many centuries, used the islands for their piratical practices and for a trade in Andamanese slaves to their own country and Siam (this up to about 1860) and have known them by the term Handuman, which most likely preserves the very ancient Hanuman (monkey, *scil.*, savage aboriginal antagonist of the Aryans) so well-known to the Indian Epics and carried down to the Malays in story and translations.

In the great Tanjore inscription of 1030 A.D. the Andamans are mentioned under a translated name along with the Nicobars, as Timaittivu, "Islands of Impurity" and as the abode of cannibals. In the Chinese *History of the Tang Dynasty* (618-906 A.D.) they are called the land of the Rakshasas, and the Andamanese are to-day regarded as Rakshasas (or ogres, i.e., traditional savage antagonists of the Aryans) by the Natives of India on being first seen, and were so called at once when they appeared in the streets on a visit to Calcutta in 1883. As the abode of the Rakshasas the Andamans were also known to the Southern Indians in mediæval times and this persistence in regarding the Andamanese as the Rakshasas or their descendants confirms the ancient derivation of "Andaman" as a name from Hanuman through Malay Handuman. 175
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The Andamanese have returned the compliment and know all Orientals as Changa or ancestral ghosts, i.e., demons, and have preserved an ancient knowledge of them in a term for trepang or sea-slug as the "Oriental's slug," the collection of this valuable edible and of the equally valuable birds'-nests being one object of the visits of the Malays, Burmese and Chinese in days gone by, in addition to trapping slaves, which last practice no doubt had something to do with the savage hostility of the Andamanese towards all who landed on their shores.

Mediæval and Modern Notices of the Islands.—The notices of the Islands by the old travellers are continuous, and they regularly appear in some shape or other on all maps from the "Ptolemies" of the 15th-16th Century onwards, till we reach the middle of the 18th Century, when the East India Company's and Royal Naval commanders and surveyors began to make accurate reports of parts of the coasts in charts preserved for us in the works of the indefatigable Dalrymple. Owing to the piracies and ill-treatment of shipwrecked and distressed crews, the Company under Lord Cornwallis commissioned the great surveyor Archibald Blair in 1788 to start a Settlement on the ordinary lines, to which convicts were afterwards sent as labourers. Blair, with the acuteness he shows in all his work, fixed upon the harbour he called Port Cornwallis, but now known as Port Blair, for the Settlement and began his labours there in 1789. The Settlement flourished under him at that spot, but was removed in 1792 for strategical reasons to the present Port Cornwallis, where it gradually perished miserably in 1796 from the effects of a bad, unhealthy site and want of experience of the climate. Here it was under Major Kyd. Blair's and Kyd's Reports have all been preserved in the *Bengal Consultations* and are published in the *Indian Antiquary*, vols. xxviii et seq. 175

Modern History of the Islands and People.—Thereafter notices of the Andamans are not numerous, but they must have occupied the Government attention, for a formal *résumé* of information was officially drawn up in 1802. In 1824 the fleet, formed for the attack on Burma, made its rendezvous at Port Cornwallis. In 1825 J. E. Alexander, *Travels from India to England*, gives an interesting account of a landing at the Little Andaman. In 1836, Malcom, the missionary, notices the Andamans in his *Travels in Southern Asia*. In 1839, Dr. Helfer, the geologist, was murdered north of Port Cornwallis. In 1844 the transports *Briton* and *Runnymede*, from Sydney and Gravesend, respectively, were wrecked together on the Archipelago in a cyclone on 12th November. They contained detachments of the 10th, 50th and 80th Regiments, and the full record of the occurrence that has been left affords a fine example of pluck, endurance and resource in a great emergency. In 1850, a Mr. Quigley from Moulmein wrote a misleading and mischievous account of a visit to Interview Island. There is preserved an interesting account of the wreck of the *Emily* in 1849 off the West Coast and of the subsequent efforts to assist the crew. On this occasion the second mate was murdered by the aborigines, and there are records at this period of other murders dating before 1848 and continuing on till 1856. These led to the second occupation of the Islands, a step which was hastened by the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857. This event threw a large number of mutineers, deserters and rebels on the hands of the Government, with whom it was difficult to deal, and in November of that year it was finally decided to send them to the Andamans to start the Settlement. The Government sent the "Andaman Committee" to make a preliminary exploration, with Dr. Mout as president, and this Committee, in a Report remarkable for its common sense, fixed upon Port Blair as the site of the Settlement. Upon this report and an

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The largest and traditionally the oldest, the original, home of the race by a consensus of Andamanese opinion and worth scientific exploration (any other to be greatly deprecated), is the kitchen-midden of Wota-Emi on Baratang in Elphinstone Harbour on the east coast of the South Andaman.

In reference to the kitchen-middens it is worth noting that all Andamanese tradition commences with the cataclysm accompanied by a subsidence of a large portion of the surface of their old country already noticed, and the people point to certain ancient kitchen-middens, such as that at Port Mouat, on the sea level to prove it. They say that these were commenced by the survivors of the cataclysm and that the sites were previously high up on the mountain sides, where no one could build a kitchen-midden.

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Early Descriptions.—I-Tsing, the Chinese Buddhist monk, in 672 A. D. (Tutakasu's Ed. p. xxx) mixed up in his account of his travels the Andamanese with the Nicobarese, and describes them thus:—

"The men are entirely naked while the women veil their person with some leaves. If the merchants in joke offer them their clothes, they wave their hands (to tell that) they do not use them."

But the earliest distinct notice of the Andamanese is in that remarkable collection of early Arab notes on India and China (851 A. D.), which was translated by Eus. Renaudot and again in our own time by M. Reinaud. It accurately represents the view entertained of this people by mariners down to our own time.

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"The inhabitants of these islands eat men alive. They are black with woolly hair and in their eyes and countenances there is something quite frightful * * * they go naked and have no boats. If they had they would devour all who passed near them. Sometimes ships that are windbound and have exhausted their provision of water touch here and apply to the natives for it; in such cases the crews sometimes fall into the hands of the latter and most of them are massacred."

This traditional charge of cannibalism still persists, though it is now, and almost certainly has always been, entirely untrue. Of the massacre of shipwrecked crews up till quite recent times there is no doubt; but the policy of conciliation, which has been unremittingly pursued for the last forty years, has made the coasts quite safe for the shipwrecked, except at points where the Jarawas touch the coast and the wilder Onges reside, the south and west of Little Andaman, the North Sentinel Island, south of Rutland Island and Hut Bay on its western coast, Port Campbell and some few miles to the north of it on the west coast of the South Andaman. Every where else shipwrecked mariners would find the people not only friendly and helpful, but likely to give notice to Port Blair at once of their predicament.

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Charge of Cannibalism.—The charge of cannibalism seems to have arisen from three observations of the old mariners. The Andamanese attacked and murdered without provocation every stranger they could on his landing; they burnt his body (as they did in fact that of every enemy); and they had weird all-night dances round fires. Combine these three observations with the unprovoked murder of one of themselves and the fear aroused by such occurrences in a far land in ignorant mariners' minds, century after century, and a persistent charge of cannibalism is almost certain to be the result.

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Language of the Aka-Beda Tribe used in the Report.—The tribe occupying the shores of the Harbour of Port Blair and its islands at the British occupation in 1858 was, in its own tongue, the Aka-Beda. Its language was the first to be studied and its customs the first to be ascertained. It may still be called the tribe that is the best known and understood.

Every tribe has its own name for itself and its neighbours, and it is therefore necessary for the purposes of this *Report* to adopt one set of names only throughout, and the set most convenient is naturally that of the Aka-Beda. In this language *aka* is a prefix with small variations to nearly all tribal names and *da* is a suffix used with almost every isolated noun. For the sake of brevity I have throughout this *Report* discarded both these affixes and used the roots only of tribal names. But it must be understood that in actual speech an Aka-Beda would, in answering such a question as "what is your tribe?", reply

"Aka-Bea-da;" and in using his tribal name in the course of a sentence he would say "Aka-Bea." In this way the full and abbreviated forms of the Andamanese Tribes as named by the Aka-Bea Tribe are as under:—

The Andamanese Tribal Names according to the Aka-Bea Language.

Full	Abbreviated
Aka-Chariar-(da)	Chariar.
Aka-Kora-(da)	Kora.
Aka-Tabo (da)	Tabo.
Aka-Yere (da) (also Aka-Jaro-da)	Yere.
Oko-Juwai-(da)	Juwai.
Aka-Kol-(da)	Kol.
Aka-Bojigryab-(da)	Bojigryab.
Aka-Balawa-(da)	Balawa.
Aka-Bea-(da)	Bea.
Oŋge	Oŋge.
Jarawa-(da)	Jarawa.

Below is given a table of the names given to themselves and each other by the five South Andaman Tribes or Bojigrijji Group, traditionally sprung from one tribe. It brings out the following facts:—in each language of the Group the prefixes and suffixes differ much and the roots remain practically the same throughout for the same sense. These facts strongly indicate one fundamental tongue for this group of languages:

Table of the names for themselves and each other used by the five South Andaman tribes or Bojigrijji group.

Sense.	Tribe.	Bea.	Balawa.	Bojigryab.	Juwai.	Kol.
Fresh-water	Bea	Aka-Bea-da	Akat-Bea.	O-Bea-da.	Oko-Beyo- lekile.	O-Bea-che.
Opposite-side	Balawa	Aka-Bala- wa-da.	Akat-Bale	O-Pole-da	Oko-Pole- lekile.	O-Pole-che.
Speak the language	Bojigryab	Aka-Boji- gyab-da.	Akat-Bo- jigryab- nga.	O-Puchik- war-da.	Oko-Puchi- kyar- lekile.	O-Puchik- war-cha.
Patterns cut on bows.	Juwai	Aka-Juwai- da.	Akat-Juwai	O-Juwai-da	Oko-Juwai- lekile.	O-Juwai- che.
Bitter or salt taste	Kol	Aka-Kol-da	Akat-Kol.	O-Kol-da.	Oko-Kol- lekile.	O-Kol-che.

So too Yere, Jeru or Jaro for the Aka-Yere Tribe means a (sort of) "canoe" in all the languages and Oŋge means "a man" in its own language.

The Twelve Tribes.—An Andamanese individual, as the people themselves recognise, belongs to a family, which belongs to a Sept, which belongs to a Tribe, which belongs to a group of tribes or division of the race. The first two of these without being specifically named are recognised, the last two have specific names.

The Census proved the existence of twelve tribes of the Andamanese, each with its clearly defined locality or rather "run," with its own language, and to a certain extent its own separate habits. The tribes are from north to south: Chariar, Kora, Tabo, Yere, Kede, Juwai, Kol, Bojigryab, Balawa, Bea, on the Great Andaman. The Oŋge-Jarawa occupies, with its Jarawa division, the interior of the South Andaman, the North Sentinel, and parts of Rutland Island; with its Oŋge division parts of Rutland Island and the Little Andaman. In the Archipelago is the Balawa tribe. Portman in his *History* divides the Andamanese into twelve tribes, necessarily omitting the Kora and Tabo, but dividing the Jarawas into three tribes according as they inhabit South Andaman, Rutland Island, and the North Sentinel. It is to that painstaking and accurate observer, Mr. E. H. Man, that we are indebted for the true differentiation of the tribes.

In their present depopulated condition the friendly tribes have amalgamated, as so many savages have done before them elsewhere in other parts of the world in similar circumstances. Thus, though the Kora, Tabo and Yere still keep more aloof than the rest in the jungles of the North Andaman, the whole of the remainder are thoroughly mixed up at the Home and practically throughout the Great Andaman and the Archipelago. This is a matter of the generation

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Fighting Capacity.—The Andamanese are bad fighters and never attack unless certain of success. During hostilities they never take any precautions as to their own safety by sentries, works, armour, or ruses of any kind, nor in the attack beyond taking advantage of cover. The only ideas of protection yet met with are among the Jarawas, who use trunk-armour consisting of a wide belt of bark and well devised sentry stations on the paths round their permanent communal huts.

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The Hostile Tribe of Jarawas.—The Jarawas and some Onges kill every stranger at sight, but the Jarawas only are in these days entirely hostile, and on the whole the Onges are friendly, the friendliness dating from the capture and subsequent judicious treatment of 24 men, women and children on the Cinque Islands in January 1883. The only positively dangerous people are thus the Jarawas, and this is to be accounted for in this way. The ancient (as proved by old separate kitchen-middens) incursion from the Little Andaman through Rutland Island of that section of the Ouge tribe, which is now known as the Jarawas, into the South Andaman set up an implacable tribal hostility between them and the Beas, its other occupants, which has been extended to the foreign settlers in Port Blair, and has nowadays become an undying distrust of all strangers and an hereditary hostility towards them.

But Colebrooke, reporting in 1790, gives a vocabulary of a people, now identified with the Ouge-Jarawa tribe by its speech, and as theories have been built up on this fact, it is as well to see carefully when and where Colebrooke met the natives and who they were.

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Colebrooke's Knowledge of them (1789).—Colebrooke left Diamond Island (Cape Negrais) on December 20th, 1789, and reached Port Cornwallis (now Port Blair) on December 23rd. On the 24th he went up the harbour and saw some natives (Jarawa Tribe) on Dundas Point. On the 26th he went up the harbour with Commodore Cornwallis (brother of the Governor-General), accompanied by a native who had been wounded in a skirmish with his tribe, found to be very hostile by the people of the snow *Viper*, and was kept on board the *Ranger*, Cornwallis's ship. He is described as "very cheerful and quite reconciled to his captivity." They went up the Bumilitan Creek as far as Bumilitan and met another native (Jarawa) who ran away. They dined (lunched) on "Mount Pleasant," a hill on the harbour near Viper Island, and met another Jarawa who exchanged his bow and arrows for a knife. On the 27th the wounded native, who had been on the *Ranger* three weeks, was put ashore by the Commodore, who uniformly treated the savages with extreme consideration. On the 28th they met the Jarawa on Dundas Point whom they had seen before, with a woman and a girl and found him again friendly. On the 29th there was trouble with the Beas Tribe at Phoenix Bay and with the Jarawas at Ariel Creek.

Colebrooke then went to the Nicobars and returned to Port Blair on February 20th, 1790, starting up north on 21st February. On the 23rd March at Port Meadows he saw some of the Beas Tribe leaving Entrance Island and saw some more hostile Beas, whom the party frightened off, coming from the North. On the 26th he went to the Archipelago, and met some hostile Balawas. On the 27th he went into Colebrooke Passage and saw some Bojigayab huts and some more of the tribe, who ran away in Elphinstone Harbour on the 29th. On the 30th they met some hostile Kols in the east entrance to Homfray's Strait and some more on the 31st off the north end of Long Island. On the 3rd and 4th April they found the Yere Tribe in Stewart Sund extremely hostile. On the 6th Blair himself met some Koras at the foot of Saddle Peak, who ran away. On the 7th Blair discovered the present Port Cornwallis and Colebrooke left for India.

It is clear from this that the only native from whom Colebrooke could have procured his *Vocabulary* was the wounded man on the *Ranger* and that man, as the *Vocabulary* shows, was a Jarawa. The tribes of all sorts—Jarawa, Beas, Bojigayab, Balawa, Kol, Yere, Kora, whom Colebrooke met, except in the case of one Jarawa and his family, exhibited either extreme fear or hostility.

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Explanation of the name Mincopie for the Andamanese.—The first word in Colebrooke's *Vocabulary*, the first ever made of any Andaman tongue, is Mincopie for "Andaman Island or native country," whence Mincopie has

become a persistent book-name for the Andamanese. It has been a great puzzle to scientific men ever since, though it is now to be identified, as will be seen later, with "Mongebe, I am (an) Onge," a phrase, which was perhaps pronounced and at any rate sounded in Colebrooke's ears as "Minggobie." His informant, in using it, apparently meant to explain that he was an Onge, or as the Jarawas seem to pronounce the name,—an Inggo. 175 101

Relations with the English.—Since the establishment of the Penal Settlement in 1858 an Andamanese Home has been created in Port Blair for the use of the aborigines, and several attempts have been made to civilise some of them and to bring up the children to a Christian education. These attempts have met with no reasonable success, the "civilised" returning to their original savagery at the first opportunity, the children deserting the schools and, except in an instance here and there, retaining nothing of their early education in after life. The existing use of the Home is that of a free asylum to which every Andamanese that likes is admitted. He may stay as long as he pleases and go when it suits him. While there he is housed, fed and taken care of, and for the sick there is a good and properly maintained hospital. From the Home, too, are taken such little necessities and luxuries as the people desire to friends at a distance and during each of the many tours taken round the coasts by the officials. In return the Andamanese of the Home are employed to help in catching runaway convicts, in collecting edible birds'-nests and trepang and other natural produce, and in making "Andamanese curios," from which a small income is derived and expended on them. They have never succeeded in acquiring any true idea of money for themselves and all their earnings have to be administered for them. It is indeed against local rules to give them money, as it is at once spent in intoxicants. The present policy, in short, is to leave them alone and to do what is possible in the conditions to ameliorate their lives. The administrative objects gained by establishing friendly relations with the tribes are the cessation of the former and much too frequent murder of shipwrecked crews, the external peace of the Settlement and the creation of a jungle police to prevent escapes of convicts, and the recapture of runaways. 175

In the days of Blair and Kyd, 1789—96, the tribes showed themselves to be practically uniformly hostile, despite the conspicuous consideration these early officials exhibited, and remained continuously so after the commencement of the re-establishment of the Settlement in 1858, attacking the working parties of convicts, just as the Jarawas do still, for iron and articles suitable to them and robbing the gardens started for food supplies. These practices had to be repressed by force, and efforts towards friendly relations had to be postponed until respect for the settlers was established. The procedure officially then adopted and carried out with such success in the end by Messrs. Corbyn, Homfray, Man, Godwin-Austen, and Portman in succession was the simple one of providing the Home and visiting the people in their own haunts, as opportunity arose, with suitable presents. 1439

In Appendix B will be found an abstract of the Jarawa raids on the Settlement, which have been continuous since 1872, when they were first differentiated. In the interval they have attacked convicts, usually at their work, on 20 occasions and friendly Andamanese Camps on 12 occasions. That is, they have made 32 attacks in 30 years. In these attacks 27 convicts and 4 Andamanese have been killed; 7 convicts, 2 police constables, and 5 Andamanese have been wounded. In counter expeditions and searches for the raiders 3 Jarawas have been killed, 9 wounded, and 20 captured. Of the captured 18 have been released in a short time and 2 have died. It will be seen thus that the hostility of the tribe is towards all strangers, including their own people, and that the policy of capture, kindness in captivity, and release with presents has not up to date borne any good fruit whatever. This is a very different story to that of their almost equally wild congeners the Onges.

II. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Portman's and Molesworth's Enquiries.—The physical characteristics of the Andamanese have been considerably studied by Mr. M. V. Portman and Major W. S. Molesworth, and as their work has never been published, the 141

ONGE-JARAWA RADICAL PREFIXES.

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Jarawa	Ongé
ingo-, ingi-, inga-, onka-, öng-, &	{ öni-, öna-, öno-, öno-, öna-, ina-, ina-, eng-, eni-, önge-
uni-	ö-
ö-, i-, ö-	ö-, ö-, a-, a-
i-	eje-, ichin-, e-
yi-	ibi-, ebe-
aha-, a-	akwa-, akwa-, aka-, ik-, ig-, i-
omo-	aha-, a-
ö-	omo-
	are-
	alan-

Of these, as prefixes relating to mankind and the human body, the following occur:—

	öni-, a general prefix of the body and then,
Class I	head, lip, neck, nose, navel, hip, testicles, stomach.
Class II	ik-, ig-, i- chest, ear.
Class III	ibi- chin.
Class IV	e- fist, knee, nail, throat.
Class V	alan- teeth.

That the relation between concrete words for the parts of the body and those for ideas belonging to them is shown by the prefixes, comes out neatly in *ik-kwa-ge*, ear: *ik-sibene*, deaf. So, too, the words *ichin-da-ge* and *i-to-ge* given for "bone" probably refer to a bone of Class II.

Proof of the Identity of Önge-Jarawa with the other Groups.—Among an untutored people, so long isolated even from the other Andamanese, one would hardly look for many roots now in common with them, but the following, which occur in such short lists as those available, sufficiently establish a common origin for the Family.

SOME COMMON ROOTS IN THE ANDAMAN LANGUAGES.

English	Önge-Jarawa	Remaining Languages
bat	wiwí	wó, wat, wot.
cold	eboma	choki (Ben).
red ochre	gralap	bilap, apha.
net	chi	chi.
mouse	che, chi	chiba (Ben, Balawa).
"God"	Ünga: (Noise, thunder)	Pulaga, Bilak (Ben wal-aga, storm).
turtle	chibe	chokbe (Kede, Charier).
water	i, ig	im (Ben, Balawa).
bone	to	ta, toa (Ben, Balawa).
wood	ta, da	ta, toa, to.

Colebrooke showed all sorts of impossible things to his Jarawa to name, and one interesting result is the following:—

English	Jarawa	Önge
cotton cloth }	pa-aga-be	be-aga-be
paper }	fat-become-is	fat-become-is

Of course, no Jarawa had ever seen before anything approaching to either object, and this man's one expression for both means "it is (has been) flattened," which is what the savage meant to convey when asked anything so impossible as to name them.

In Appendix B will be found a further list of Önge words to aid in the study of this interesting language.

Derivation of Mincopie.—We are now in a position to solve a great puzzle of ethnographers for a century and more: why were the Andamanese called Mincopie by Europeans? What word does this transcription represent? It can now be split up thus—

M-ö-aga-be.

I-man-kied-am

(I am an Önge)

Or, as the the Jarawas perhaps pronounce the expression "M-inggo-be" or even "M-injo-be," I am an Inngo (Injo). The name given by the Onges to

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themselves is a "verbal noun" *i-age*, man-being. So that when questioned as to himself by Colebrooke, this Jarawa replied "M'inggo-be," or something like it, which compound expression by mistranscription and misapprehension has become the well-known Mincopie of the general ethnological books in many languages for an Andamanese. The Onges call their own home, the Little Andaman, Gwabe-l'Ouge. Jarawa is a modern Bea term, possibly radically identical with Yerewa, the Bea name for the Northern Group of Tribes.

It is just possible that Colebrooke's Jarawa misunderstood what was wanted altogether and simply said, "I am (will be, would be) drinking: *me-iaggo-be, I-drink-do.*"

I have now to record a great disappointment. The proof that the method herein adopted for recovering the Jarawa Language was correct lay in the fact that the word *i-age* for "water" was ascertained from a little Jarawa boy captured in February, 1902, and the identical word was quite independently unearthed from Colebrooke's and Portman's Vocabularies as *Ouge-Jarawa* for "water." The only other word clearly ascertained from the boy *wa-le-ay* for "pig," has not been gathered independently as yet. This little boy was the last of the prisoners left, who were captured on that occasion (*vide* Ch. III, Appx. C.) as the women and small children and girls were all returned and only two boys kept back for a while in order to get their language, etc., from them. Of these, the elder died of fever and on the very day that their language was fairly recovered, and we were in a position to set to work to learn quickly from him, the younger died very suddenly, without warning illness, of pneumonia.

Report of a Survey of the Inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands during 1948-49

[P1]

By

B. S. GUHA

Director, Department of Anthropology

About the end of the year 1946, Mr H. J. Stooks, Deputy Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs, consulted me with regard to proposals made by Sri A. V. Thakkar of the Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh for undertaking work for the amelioration of the conditions of the inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the same lines as the Sangh has been doing among the Bhils and other tribes of Central India. The problem of the Aborigines of the Andaman Islands, however, is not the same as that of the other primitive tribes of India. These people are some of the most ancient remnants of the human race still surviving in any part of the world, who had been very little affected from contact with other people and subsist principally on fishing and hunting. The need among them is not so much the spread of education and social uplift as the arrest of the decline in population which has been most alarming. Since the establishment of the Penal Settlement at Port Blair in 1858, the condition of the "Friendly Tribes" among these inhabitants have been most distressing. Due in the beginning to armed encounters with the forces of the Government, and also as a result of ravages from diseases like tuberculosis and syphilis contracted from Indian convicts, there has been a continuous decline in the Andamanese population. From an estimated figure of about 10,000 people in 1779 the tribe has been reduced to only 70 in 1931, and at the time of our visit there were probably not more than 37 individuals still living. Whether it will be possible to save the Andamanese from the fate of the Tasmanians whose last surviving representative passed away about 1770 is extremely doubtful.

The hostile branch of the Andamanese tribes known as the Jarawa-Onge-Sentinelese group, fortunately has been spared the fate of their more "friendly" kinamen, and as a result of implacable hostility and comparative isolation have survived to a much larger extent. In the western forest belts of Middle and South Andamans, the Little Andaman, and the North Sentinel Islands they have resisted all intrusions from outsiders and were known to have lived in these places comparatively unmolested. No accurate census of these tribes however, was ever taken, but from estimates made by people who had some knowledge of the tribes, it does not seem possible that the total strength of these people could be more than a few hundred souls altogether before the last war. What has happened since and how far these people, specially the Jarawas, have suffered from Japanese occupation cannot accurately be determined. It is known that there had been some bombing by the Japanese in the Jarawa tract, but whether any Jarawa was killed is not known. I, therefore, suggested to Mr Stooks that an anthropological survey of the Islands was essential and a probable estimate of the surviving settlements of the population made before the question of any social welfare work can be considered.

114 while its culture was already in the process of disintegration. Moreover, MAN dealt almost exclusively with the South Andaman tribes, mainly with the Aka-Bea, while RADCLIFFE-BROWN's researches were centered mainly on some of the northernmost tribes. As a result, not all the tribes were given equal attention. This is regrettable since their religious concepts and myths were by no means uniform. Therefore one cannot say that our information about the ten Great Andaman tribes is as full and up to modern standards as would be desirable. There is, of course, no more hope of ever filling the existing gaps in our knowledge. It is the more necessary that the still relatively intact groups of Andamanese be thoroughly studied before it is too late.

Ongi (Onges)

161 The Ongi of Little Andaman owe their survival to their isolation and to the fact that they remained hostile until the end of the 1880's and even thirty years ago were not yet considered as quite reliable. Nevertheless, their numbers are constantly decreasing as the following estimates in the various Census Reports seem to indicate

1901 . . . 672
1911 . . . 631
1921 . . . 346
1931 . . . 250

161 Of course, these figures, being mere estimates, are not reliable, and the last two are too low. As Professor LIDIO CIPRIANI of Florence, who spent many months with the Ongi in 1952, 1953, and 1954, kindly informed us, he came to different results. In his letter, dated May 2nd, 1958, he writes:

" I visited all communal huts with aim of taking a census of the Ongi. Every family has a bed in a communal hut, i. e. a kind of 'ritual' bed on which they marry and under which they are buried when they die. I prepared a list of persons using each bed. This added up to about 500 Ongi, but I saw less than 200 of them. The majority is still very shy and, when approached, ready to disappear into the jungle. The names of the absent persons were given to me by other Ongi. I left this list of personal names with the Department of Anthropology, Indian Museum, Calcutta, but kept a copy".

161 This would seem to indicate that the situation is not quite as bad as appears from the Census Reports. But even so, it is very serious and is constantly deteriorating. The Census Report of 1931 says that "the numbers decrease year by year mainly from infection such as influenza introduced at times of contact with civilization. Some septa have almost completely disappeared during the last years".

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- A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, *Notes on the Languages of the Andaman Islands*, Anthropos, Vol. IX, 1914, pp. 36—52. *The Andaman Islanders*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1933, pp. 413—415, 419—422, 436, 439—440, 461—463, 481—482, 484, 491.
- RANDHIR KUMAR DE, *The Onges of Little Andaman*, Vanyajati, Vol. V, No. 1, 1957, pp. 12—17.

Jarawa

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Although the Jarawa inhabit the jungles of South and Middle Andaman, they do not belong to the Great Andaman group of tribes, but are culturally and linguistically related to the Ongi. It is assumed that they originally came from Little Andaman. The Jarawa owe their survival to their having remained isolated as a result of their implacable hostility toward the British (now Indian) colonial settlement. Information on their raids and the punitive expeditions against them will be found in the respective volumes of the Census of India. In 1931 their number was estimated at either 70 (BONINGTON) or 120 (HUTTON). Their culture conforms to the general Andamanese pattern, but differs in various respects from that of their former neighbours, the extinct Great Andaman tribes. Except for their communal huts and such of their material possessions as were found during punitive expeditions, practically nothing is known about it. Our knowledge of their language is restricted to lists of words col-

Our knowledge
 24 Their language is restricted to lists of words collected from captive Jarawas by COLEBROOK in 1789-90 and by PORTMAN in the 19th century. 119 648

Research on the Jarawa would be highly desirable, but will be impossible as long as they remain hostile.

Census of India, 1901, Vol. III, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by Sir RICHARD C. TEMPLE, pp. 4, 52-53, 68-90, 117-121. 113

Census of India, 1911, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 7, 31-39, 82-83.

Census of India, 1921, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 5, 39-43.

Census of India, 1931, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by M. C. C. BONINGTON, pp. 8-9, 15-16, 23.

A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, *Notes on the Languages of the Andaman Islands*, *Anthropos*, vol. IX, 1914, pp. 38-39.

The Andaman Islanders, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1933, pp. 86, 410, 413-415, 423, 432-433, 439-440.

North Sentinel Island

North Sentinel is an island of about 30 square miles west of the southern tip of Great Andaman. It has been briefly visited by Government officers on various occasions, but it seems that no contacts were ever made with the natives, except on December 27th, 1886, when the Ongi, who accompanied PORTMAN on his trip, "caught" some of them (Census of India, 1901, p. 92). From PORTMAN's report it does not become clear whether or not he saw these temporary captives himself. Our knowledge of the culture is restricted to a few observations on their material possessions. The communal huts differ from those of the rest of the Andamanese. The canoes differ from those of both Great and Little Andaman, but are more like those of the latter. The bows resemble those of the Jarawa and Ongi. On the basis of this it is assumed that the natives are related to the Jarawa and Ongi, but PORTMAN's Ongi companions are said to have found that the persons whom they had caught talked "an entirely different language". 101 131 648

In 1901 the number of the natives was estimated as 117. This estimate was based on the area of the island and the assumption that the density of the population was approximately the same as that of Great Andaman in precolonial times. The figure was not changed in either 1911 or 1921. In 1931 the number was estimated as 50 "on conclusions arrived at from several visits during the last decade and after counting the number of huts found and the sleeping places", but it is said that this does not necessarily mean a decrease in population. "It is believed that the population is stationary, for 161 197

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The Jarawa of the Andaman Islands

By S. S. SARKAR (Calcutta)

Introduction

- 101 The Jarawa of the Andaman Islands are confined along the western
131 coast of South Andaman, where their movements are restricted - roughly
speaking - between Port Anson on the north and Constance Bay on the south
(fig. 1). They are also reported from the southwestern part of the island of
Baratang - an island completely separated from South and Middle Andaman.
The latter group must, therefore, use some kind of watercraft to cross over
from one island to the other. The extreme northern tip of the South Andaman
[501] Island was until recently used by the Jarawa for crossing over to Middle
Andaman through the two intervening Islands of Spike and Bluff with the
help of bamboo rafts (SARKAR, 1954). This route has now been checked owing
to the establishment of a police picket on Bluff Island.
- 101 The Jarawa also appear to have used some sort of watercraft to migrate
131 into North Sentinel Island in the distant past. Their craft may have been
501 similar to the outrigger canoes described by BONIG (1912) on the occasion of
his visit to this island. The distance from Port Mouat to North Sentinel is
about 24 miles and although BONIG says that "the boats are not very sea-
worthy" this distance must at one time have been crossed by the ancestors
of the present-day inhabitants of North Sentinel Island. BONNINGTON (1932)
used the term Sentinelese for them, while Lowry (1912, 1923) preferred to call
them Jarawa. It appears from what little is known about them that they are
more akin to the Jarawa of South Andaman than to the other Negrito groups.
No canoes are reported from among the Jarawa of South Andaman; it appears
that the bamboo raft is enough for their transport on water. The Jarawa
[184] outrigger canoes of North Sentinel Island, which BONIG mentions as some-
what different from those of the Onge or the Andamanese, indicate a somewhat
higher cultural status of the former as compared with the groups living on
South Andaman.

[P. ix]

INTRODUCTION

A group of north-south running islands as they are, the Andaman Islands have as many as 204 small islands where the impact of civilisation and growth has been little and the human history has been one of stagnation rather than of chequered career. Being a land of aborigines, the foreign intrusion has been quite feeble though mention about these islands is found in the early records of the travellers. Though the knowledge about the islands is derived from the notes which date back to 2nd Century A.D., the contacts with the foreigners have been all the time transient and extremely feeble. Before the formation of the penal settlement, the islands have been known as an island of horror because of the presence of such tribal people who would eat up the man they encounter and as regards the wealth there has been imaginary illusion, sometimes being called as the Island of Gold. The historical record of the islands which can be built with a fair degree of precision is since the formation of the penal settlement. There has been the search for resources as well as their exploitation. However, all the attempts for finding minerals and the geological explorations have shown the possibility of the existence of some poor quality coal, copper etc. Virtually there has been a conspicuous lack of efforts for the development of the islands. The penal settlement which grew up in Port Blair did not have any considerable influence on the overall development of the islands. Nevertheless with the more intimate knowledge about the islands, the forest exploitation had increased and the land around Port Blair was cleared for agriculture. The little amount of agriculture that was started and fostered by the local-borns in and around Port Blair never expanded considerably and it remained confined to a few areas of South Andaman only. The aborigines were very much widespread and in the beginning they had exercised hostility and arrogance which had in course of time given place to a very friendly and amicable terms with some of the tribal groups i.e. the Onges and the Andamanese. The Jarawas, however, still now maintain their hostility and the attempts for bringing them under amicable terms have so long proved futile.

Nothing more deserves a special note in the islands than the aboriginal population. Because of the insular nature of the islands, the aboriginal population is considered to be one of the purest type though the foreign intrusion has brought about an extremely rapid impoverishment and decay only during the last few decades of contact with these aborigines.

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161 Of the two main groups of aborigines, the Great Andaman Group and
177 the Little Andaman Group, the former being the most widespread and
182 numerous in the Great Andamans has become completely non-existent
depicting the example of the decay within an extremely short time, especially since the impact of the foreign people. The fate of the later group is also quite shattering—the Jarawas have experienced both numerical decay and territorial shrinkage and the Onges are the only tribes who live exclusively in the Little Andaman but they have been also facing the signs of decay.

133 A glance at the map of the Andaman islands and adjacent countries shows the continuity of these islands with the Arakan Yoma of Burma in the north and with the Indonesian islands in the south. The islands of both the Andaman and Nicobar groups are primarily of sedimentary formations of the Eocene period with occasional igneous intrusions. Later formations of coral are also quite widespread. The surface topography of the regions is typically flat-topped being typical of the sandstone regions and the peaks are in most cases formed of igneous intrusions. The islands are comprised of a number of longitudinal ranges running from the north to the south and in between the ranges short streams flow. The heights of the hills are generally 1000' and never exceed 2500'.

132 The islands experience a high annual temperature and the yearly rainfall is as high as 130 inches in Port Blair and the amount decreases as one moves to the north and the east. The ameliorating influence of the sea is quite appreciable.

131 With an area of 2508 square miles and the number of islands being as many as 204, only 4 main islands, North Andaman (490.20 sq miles), Middle Andaman (561.00 sq miles), South Andaman (359.51 sq miles) and Little Andaman (289.90 sq miles) have an area of more than 100 sq miles and the rest are sufficiently small in size either to command human settlement or economic activity.

101 The economy of the tribal people is of the primitive form of hunting and collecting though the precise modes of living vary to some extent depending upon the nature of environment under which they have to live. The knowledge of distribution and of actual number of these aborigines is far from accurate. The Andamanese were the most widespread in all parts of the Great Andamans and in the South Andaman they (Aka bea) had to remain vigilant against the possible attacks and territorial expansion of the Jarawas. The Andamanese, as said earlier, have completely died out. The Jarawas, though have dwindled to a negligible number,

have been pushed into the western jungle infested areas of South Andaman by the foreign settlers and even now attempts of establishing contacts and maintaining good will have proved completely futile. The Onges at present, inhabit the island of Little Andaman, 40 miles from South Andaman and they have come under very negotiable and friendly terms. A detailed account of these aboriginal population has been given in a chapter on the aboriginal population. 101

Leaving aside the aboriginal population, the islands are being inhabited by the local-borns or the Andaman Indians who have settled in and around the urban centre of Port Blair. The convicts of the penal settlement have settled in these areas by bringing their family members from the mainland or by getting married with the convict women and to-day they are the Andaman Indians. The Andaman Indians drawn from different parts of India and having different languages have become an integrated homogeneous community with Hindi as their spoken language and Urdu as their written script. Such a formation of homogeneous community is verily an example of fusion of different groups under a geographical setting with a common economic and social background. These people shared the major merit of development of the islands. Though agricultural development was attempted, it remained confined to a few areas only. The Andaman Indians being mostly non-agriculturists have shown a reluctance to agricultural practices which is evident from the gradual inflow of these people from agricultural to non-agricultural pursuits, especially in the Government services. The absence of any genuine attempt, to a great extent because of the lack of Government help, has told immensely on the relatively poor development of agriculture. These people are getting fairly educated at Schools in Port Blair and have the collegiate education in the mainland. The educational attainments have, however, been quite upto the satisfaction of meeting the demands of the institutions at Port Blair and in the islands. 563

Apart from the aboriginal population, a few groups of Bhanthus and Mapillas, two criminal tribes of India, and a few Burmans and Karens have settled in the islands. Excepting the Karens who have settled through free enterprise in the north of Middle Andaman, all the groups were brought to the islands to serve the terms of their conviction. However, all these groups have settled quite peacefully in the islands with agriculture as their basis of economy. A limited number of people come to the islands for serving in the administration but they have no interest to settle in the islands and even to-day, the service in the Govt. offices

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The Nicobar group of islands being separated off from the Andaman Islands by the Ten Degree Channel, though constitute a part of the continuation of the island in the north, the geographical entity of these islands are conspicuously different from that of the others. The Nicobar Islands have an area of 635 sq. miles and have 19 islands, out of which 12 islands are inhabited. The human habitats are exceedingly interesting and these people are distinctly different from the aborigines of the Andamans not only in their physical characteristics but also in their cultural attributes. Material life is much more improved and they have been all the time experiencing a healthy growth in comparison to the rapid decay of the Andaman aborigines. Culturally the affinity seems to be closer with the Indonesian islands. Shom Pens, the highlanders of the Great Nicobar, live in perfect isolation and have an extremely primitive economy. The staple crop is coconut and a number of fruit trees and yam are also grown. Some of the islands have become extremely overcrowded and need immediate dispersal to some of the less crowded islands. A detailed geographical treatment would require much more words to say about these thriving people and their contact with the foreigners than those of the Andamans. However it remains incomplete if the study of the Nicobar Islands is not incorporated in that of the Andaman islands. Therefore, in spite of the distinct geographical contrast with the Andamans, a short geographical summary has been given at the end of the book.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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that, "it should be remembered that it was to the interest of the pirates who made the Andamans a headquarters of their raids and also enslaved the aborigines, to exaggerate the real dangers they encountered and spread such tales regarding the Andamans as would keep them away." The islands have been ravaged by the Malay sea pirates from very early times. They used to come to collect shells and to carry on the slave-trade. These sea-pirates, through their exaggerated propaganda, made the islands a monopoly ground of their own and, in consequence, people used to know it as a land of horror. The slaves brought by the pirates used to find their way in the courts of Siam, Cambodia and Indo-China for many centuries, thus bringing about the deepest distrust and hostility on the part of the aborigines to all the visitors to the islands. 175 648

The name '*Andamans*' of the islands is a corrupt form of the name '*Hanuman*' or 'Monkey peoples', the aboriginal antagonists of the Aryan immigrants in India. In the earliest Hindu mythology, the *Ramayana*, these islands were believed to be a land of the *Hanumans*. Malaysians used to refer to them as '*Handuman*' which is even a corrupt form of *Hanuman* and from Malay the knowledge about the Andamans first spread into the different parts of the world. Hence the '*Handuman*' has further evolved into '*Andaman*'. 101 175 648

(2) *The British Regime and the Period of Foreign Intrusion and Settlements Since 1788.*

Factual records of the history of the Andamans can only be had since 1877 with the steps taken by the British Government of India to found a penal colony in the islands. The disturbing activities of the Malay pirates and the frequent massacres of the ship-wrecked crews around the Andaman Sea necessitated the Government of India to form a penal colony in the islands. For the materialisation of such a proposal, Lord Cornwallis sent Lt. Blair and Lt. Colebrook to investigate into the possibilities of such a colonisation in the islands in the year 1788. In accordance with their investigations, the first settlement was established on Chatham Island* at Port Cornwallis (now Port Blair) consisting of a free colony. It was found that the North East harbour (now Port Cornwallis) was a better place for settlement because of its fine harbour and nearness to Calcutta. So, in 1792, the settlement was transferred 175 648

* Chatham Islands is the port of the Port Blair town and is a very small island.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE PEOPLE

The study of the people of the Andamans is rendered extremely interesting by virtue of the great diversities in the types of population. Obviously for the islands like the Andamans the diversities of population are far out of proportion. The islands remained as an abode of the aborigines, the negritos, in complete seclusion and the only outside interference that had tampered the islands were the occasional raids by the sea pirates from Malaya. The beliefs about the occasional exchanges of commodities and ideas of the pirates with the Andamanese and the trade of the Andamanese for being sold as slaves in the courts of Siam and Cambodia are still now questions of doubt. However, it was only at the end of the 18th century, with the attempt of the formation of settlements and later on, of the penal settlement, that there began an influx of foreign peoples, mainly from the different parts of the mainland of India. With the formation of the penal colony, convicts were brought over to the islands in numbers and also a few attempts of free colonisation by some people from Burma and India were made. The convicts who were from the different parts of India and the free colonizers who were diverse enough in their social and cultural traits gave a character of heterogeneity to the islands. It was only after the attainment of the independence that the settlement of the East Bengal refugees and of some people from South India is taking place in the Andamans. This is going to add further to the cultural diversity of the islands. This scheme of colonisation of the East Bengal refugees and of some people from South India is the first attempt of some importance for the permanent colonization in the islands.

Such a variety in the types of people, can be broadly divided into three groups.

- (a) The aboriginal population.
- (b) The Later Settlers, and
- (c) The New Settlers.

The aboriginal population belongs to the negrito stock and therefore, has an affinity with the Semangs and Sakais of Malaya, the Veddas of Ceylon and the other negrito groups of Southeast Asia. Some attribute the origin of these aborigines to the settlement of some Portuguese negro slaves who had survived by coming to these islands after a ship-

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174 wreck. However, this idea is totally untenable. On the other hand
101 there are sufficient grounds to believe that these aborigines came down
from the lower region of Burma. On their arrival at the islands, they
moved to the different parts of the islands and very likely, because of
the different types of physical environment they developed different
traits and as such a few groups of the population are discernible.
They are the

- (a) The Jarawas,
- (b) " Onges,
- (c) " Andamanese, and
- (d) " Sentinelese.

101 All these groups, though physically akin to each other, have devel-
131 oped different social and economic traits and the ways of earning their
food and constructing their shelters are conditioned by their immediate
environment. These aborigines who had spread over the different parts
of the Great Andamans are experiencing a gradual shrinkage in their
areas of command because of the gradual expansion of the areas of
the new settlers. The Jarawas are to-day confined to the western part
of the South and Middle Andaman, the Andamanese, who are extreme-
ly limited in number are along the coastal areas, the Onges in the Little
Andaman and Rutland Is. and the Sentinelese in the Sentinel islands. The
relation of aborigines with the foreign people became one of deep distrust
and hostility with some of the groups, especially the Jarawas and the
Sentinelese, which has been very rightly explained by M. V. Portman
as an outcome of the unfriendly attitude of the foreigners. The Onges
and the Andamanese have however become very friendly with the for-
eigners. The number of the aboriginal population of the Andamans, is
undoubtedly a matter of considerable speculation and it is more so in
the case of the Jarawas and the Sentinelese whereas, for the Onges and
the Andamanese, the estimate is fairly correct.

161 The aboriginal population of the Andamans is fast declining in
number and there is apprehension that inspite of the best of attempts,
the chances of the survival of the aborigines for long ages are extremely
limited. Undoubtedly, the aboriginal population of the Andamans is
an object of interesting study. Such an interest grows out of its being
the only purest negrito group in the world and the modes of their life
depict very well the nature of symbiotic relationship existing between
man and environment. Such a primitive economy of hunting and
178 collecting has not changed appreciably inspite of the impact with the
foreigners except imbibing some foreign vices.

Negritos

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LAND AND PEOPLE OF THE ANDAMANS

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of all these things, locally not available, was felt by the aborigines only due to their slight contact with the later settlers.

However, a broad two-fold division of the aboriginal population can be made.

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1. Aborigines of the Great Andaman Group—All the aborigines of the Great Andamans with the exception of the Jarawas, the most hostile aborigines living in the southwestern part of the Andamans.
 2. Aborigines of the Little Andaman Group—the Onges of the Little Andaman, the Jarawas of the South Andaman & the Sentinelese of the North Sentinel island.

As to how these two groups came into being and their areas of distribution, various theories have been put forward. Long after the attainment of the individual traits of these two groups, a continuous northward movement of the aborigines from the Little Andaman was in vogue and one such party had arrived in the Great Andamans who have been lately known as the Jarawas, who were all along subjected to pressure of the local natives belonging to the Great Andaman Group, the *Aka bea* of South Andaman. The very development of the hostility of the Jarawas and their complete seclusion from the other aboriginal groups owe to their being continuously subjected to the adversities. B. V. Eickstedt¹ has been of the opinion that the aborigines of the Andamans entered into the Great Andamans in two groups—the earlier group comprises the Onge, Jarawas and the Sentinelese while to the later group belong the ancestors of the Great Andaman Group. The passage of the Great Andaman Group has led to a constant southward push of the earlier group which has ultimately led to their habitation in the islands of the south i.e., the Little Andaman, Rutland Island and a part of the South Andaman. Cipriani has been emphatic enough in justifying the views of Brown that the Jarawas reached the Great Andamans from the south. Though they are supposed to have come from the Great Andamans by canoes, the art of constructing canoes and of using them have been completely forgotten and Cipriani believes that such instances of the loss of knowledge of the construction of canoes and their uses are many. A list of the names of the camps, given by Cipriani in the 1951 census, dating back to antiquity and having a good supply of drinking water and of

ABORIGINAL POPULATION

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food lie in a chain running from north to south along the islands between Little and Great Andamans. This has been one of the most convincing proofs of the movement of the aborigines from the south to the north. Cipriani writes, 'All these organisations, with geographical names, camps, places for water and food, indicate an ancient navigating experience moving from the south to the north. About a century and half ago the Jarawas are said to have still been in possession of canoes and the same is said of the savage inhabitants of the North Sentinel Island less than 50 years ago. In a surprisingly short period the technique of making canoes seems to have been completely forgotten as a result of the difficulties of using them.'

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THE ABORIGINES OF THE GREAT ANDAMAN GROUP

Andamanese, as they are called, were the most widespread and the largest in number. They had split up ultimately into a few sub-groups from the north to the south. The different groups are *Aka-kora*, *Aka-bao*, *Aka-jeru* and *Aka-bea*. There has been a deplorable decline in the number of these aborigines who in the bygone ages exceeded all other groups in number. At present the number is only 23, a considerable reduction from the number 625 only in the beginning of the 20th century. Though the present importance of the Andamanese because of the extremely poor number is far from significant, they are of no small interest for the study of the anthropologist, especially the impact of these people with the later settlers.

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The consequences of the impact of the outsiders on the Andamanese have been far from satisfactory. With the formation of the penal colony, the aborigines continued to develop feud and on the 14th of May, 1959 a clash between the aborigines and the Govt. occurred which is known as the Battle of Aberdeen. Aberdeen is at the heart of the town of Port Blair. Efforts of pacifying these aborigines were made and for bringing them into closer terms of amity, the 'Andamanese Home' was started in 1863 by Rev. H. Corbyn Chaplain. They were employed for working with the convicts taught to speak English and wear clothes. The consequence of such an impact has been alarmingly devastating because of the infiltration of a number of vices and diseases which only paved the way for their impoverishment and decay (For further particulars see demographic characteristics).

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2 Cipriani, L.— On the origin of the Andamanese, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Census of India, 1951.

Negritos

105 For the fact that the Andamanese inhabits the coastal areas of the
177 Andamans, the fishing is an well-known art to them. The pristine cul-
182 ture is virtually lost and the few who are still now surviving have been
brought under the folds of government help. Still now the headmen
[225] of the Andamanese in the Middle Andaman, *Loka* is found doing turtle
[48] hunting in their canoes and climbing up the coconut trees without the
help of any rope. Still now they are found dancing in groups but they
are few and far between. All of them wear clothes and live in the huts
made by the Forest Department.

THE ABORIGINES OF THE LITTLE ANDAMAN GROUP.

101 The Onges, the Jarawas and the Sentinelese belong to this group.

The Jarawas

177 Of all these three groups, the Jarawas only live in the Great Andaman
648 and their occurrence in the Great Andamans has been explained
[101] by many authorities, as has been explained earlier. The Jarawas are
[18] implacably hostile and the best of efforts to bring them under terms
of amity have proved futile. Lt. Colebrook and Archibald Blair first
came in contact with the Jarawas and in course of time, the Aka-beas,
belonging to the Great Andaman Group, living in the South Andaman
became friendly with the foreigners while the hostility of the Jarawas
remained unabated. The Jarawa hostility has been always increasing
and it was more so since 1921. In 1923, 37 Jarawas were shot and in
1938, a Jarawa woman and her 4 children were captured. So the
chances of meeting the Jarawas have been few and far between and
the great decline in their number has in all practical senses stopped the
apprehension of their raids in the new settlement areas. Still now, of
course a person penetrating deep into the forests of the eastern parts
of South Andaman should always be on the guard against an attack
from the Jarawas.

The Onges.

The Onges, having experienced the impact of the foreigners at the
latest period, are at present the most widespread of all the aborigines
of the Andamans. They do not have the truculence of the Jarawas and
the attempts for bringing them under closer ties and terms of amity with
the foreigners have proved successful, though the essential traits of
their social, cultural and material life remain unaltered.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION

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the felling of the tree, chiselling the lumber and processing it further to give the shape of a canoe. Buckets of wood are also constructed by them from the softwood tree. Two types of baskets are made, the smaller ones are more well-finished than the bigger ones. The former is known as *tolewaqa* and the later *tole-laya*. Such activities have introduced the use of dahs, chisels, and iron files among the Onges, from the iron pieces derived from the sea shores. The other important pieces of their craftsmanship are the beautiful weavings of fibre, tussel of yellow fibre used by the women in their front. However, the art of making the earthen pots has been completely forgotten.

The leisure in their lives has helped the development of some amount of aesthetic senses among the Onges. All the Onges men and women shave their heads with flakes of glass, obtained from the sea-borne glass bottles. The body of the Onges are also painted with white clay which save their skin from insect-bite while red paint serves medicinal purposes if some individual is having fever. In times of mourning, red ochre paint is a taboo.¹

Early marriage is the custom. The widows are looked down upon by the society. Some incidents of widow murder and drowning are heard. In the married life, the husband is devoted to his wife and both the husband and wife work for collecting their food.

Dances and songs are in vogue and there are practically songs for every occasion and activity. Most of their songs are more plaintive than joyous.

There are three broad divisions of the Onges of the Little Andaman :

- (1) *Giremeke-Gobeule* group inhabiting the northeastern coast of the island ;
- (2) *Engakwale* group live in the interior of the islands ; and
- (3) *Gireraragobeule* group live in the southern and western coasts of the islands.

In spite of all the limitations, the Onges have been considered as one of the happiest people of the world with plenty of food and water to eat and drink and with very few social cankers to fight with. But as is common to all other aborigines of the Andamans, a decline in their number is discernible.

The Sentinelese

The Sentinelese are the least known of all the aborigines of the Andaman Islands.

¹ The Oge of the Little Andaman—A short guide book ; Anthropological Gallery, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

101 mans. They live in the North Sentinel island and Portman had only made a few observations in the abandoned settlement of these aborigines. In 1886, Portman contacted a few Sentinelese with the help of a few Onges. [197] The affinity of the Sentinelese with the Onges have been detected but the language of the Sentinelese is different from the Onges. However, only later researches can reveal more facts about their lives.

PRESENT DAY DISTRIBUTION OF THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION

101 The islands, though remained essentially a land of the aborigines, have
161 a present day distribution which is very much discrete in nature. The
361 nature of the distribution was very likely much more widespread in different parts of the islands but the great decline in their number coupled with gradual expansion of the area of the later settlers led to a continued recession of the aborigines in the more desolate areas. Thus there has been a great shrinkage in the territory of the aborigines of the South Andaman where no settlements of any importance had developed.

[177] There are only a few Andamanese (23) who are still now surviving in the Middle and North Andamans and they live in the huts built up by the Forest Department.

The exact areas of inhabitation of the Jarawas are anybody's guess. Though the Jarawas have suffered a considerable decline in their number, no evidences of their distribution beyond the South Andaman are in view. Living under the cold patronage and hostility of the neighbours, the *Aka-beas*, a sub-group of the Andamanese, the Jarawas were always subjected to all their efforts of territorial expansion. Though their exact areas of distribution have not been traced so far, it is probable that they live in the dense forests of the South Andaman, especially in the least disturbed and unhaunted forest areas of the west. However, their biggest concentration is believed to be between Port Constance, Port Meadows and Shaol Bay.

The Sentinelese inhabit the North Sentinel Island and only further exploration in the island can furnish an idea about their exact spots of distribution.

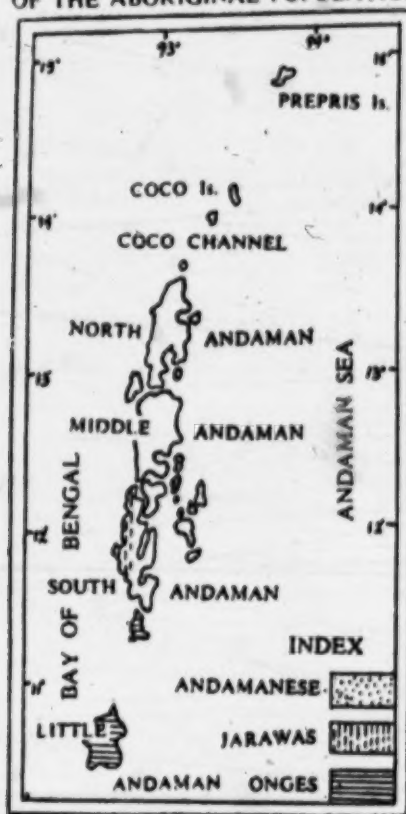
[484] The most predominant in number are the Onges who inhabit the island of Little Andaman. However they make occasional voyages to the Rutland and Cinque Island where some of them live. The areas of distribution of the Onges in Little Andaman are mainly in the coastal areas of the northeast, south and west and also in the interior.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION

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This speaks very well how in some isolated spots of the islands a remnant of the widespread negrito of the past stand on the verge of imminent decay.

AREAS OF DISTRIBUTION
OF THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION



SCALE 1 TO 70 MILES

DEMOGRAPHIC SET UP

A group of aborigines with their pristine culture in these isolated islands are sharing the same fate with many other aboriginal population of the world, of a considerable decline and impoverishment. It is be-

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Negritos

161 yond doubt that the impact of the people having better material culture on the aboriginal population has resulted in an acceleration of their decay. The aborigines of the Great Andaman Group are the first people in the islands to come in contact with the later settlers and the early incorporation of many of the vices of these new comers have resulted in the furtherance of their decay. Such devastating effects are also observed in the case of many other aboriginal groups. The Red Indians of U.S.A. and the native population of Malanesia are only a few among the many others who are such victims of decline, more so immediately after the impact of the later settlers.

101 Whatever inadequate data are available about the number of
161 aborigines and the other demographic characteristics, they show the
162 nature of imbalance which stands in the way of their successful growth.

Table No. 1*
The aboriginal population.

Tribe	1858	1885	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951
	100		39	36	17	7		
Karo	500		96	71	48	24		
Tabo	200		48	62	18	6		
Yeve	700		218	180	101	46		
Kede	500		59	34	6	2		
Juwai	300	2000	48	9	5	0		23
Koj	100		11	2	0	0		
Bojigayab	300		50	36	9	1		
Bea	500		37	19	1	0		
Belawa	300		19	15	4	2		
			625	464	209	88		23
Onge	700	1250	672	631	346	350		600
Jarawa	600		585	231	231	170		350
	4800	3250	1882	1326	786	608		973

114 In spite of the fact that the data of the aboriginal population, as
161 given in the Table No. 1, is far from accurate, a very good idea of the nature of decline of the aboriginal population can be assessed. As is evident from the Table, the population of 4800 in 1858 has reduced to 608 in 1931 in less than 75 years.

* The figures are not at all accurate.

THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS

162 The population of the Andamans, on the other hand, is now almost entirely of recent immigration: there are no Europeans permanently resident, but a large number of colonists of Indian, Burmese or Malayan origin have made their home in the islands. In the Indian census of 1931, the entire stable population of the Andamans and Nicobars was assessed at thirty thousand, 18,962 in the Andamans and 12,009 in the Nicobars, not counting the Shom-Pen. The few aboriginals remaining in the Andamans are anthropologically of extreme importance. Classified among the Negritos, or Asiatic pygmies, they are one of the few surviving groups of pygmies who in the past were widely scattered all over the world. They can be divided into three groups, clearly distinguished one from the other by their mode of life, their present genetic isolation (although they certainly all originated from a common stock) and their attitude towards outsiders:

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1 The Arioto, the friendly Andamanese, once very numerous along the coast of Great Andaman and now reduced to only twenty-three individuals of pure stock; now almost completely sterile, they are near to extinction. They manage to survive only because of the help given to them by the Indian Government, which has established small camps along the coasts of Middle Andaman.

2 The Jarawas, still implacably hostile to foreigners, living a nomadic existence in South and Middle Andaman. One solitary group occupies a tiny island thirty miles west of South Andaman, surrounded by seas so stormy that they are frequently impassable. This is known as North Sentinel, to distinguish it from South Sentinel, twenty miles to the south and uninhabited. Landing on North Sentinel, as indeed penetrating anywhere on Great Andaman, has hitherto always entailed vicious fighting with the Jarawas, who are determined to repulse any stranger from their last refuge. They are well sheltered by an unbelievably dense forest, which has so far made it impossible to subdue them, though there are today probably no more than two hundred surviving.

3 The Onges, sole inhabitants of Little Andaman, into which they have withdrawn. There are not more than five hundred surviving today, and these are in a state of serious demographic decline. It is probable that before 1932 no one had ever approached their camps in the interior of the island. Until the present day, they

THE PEOPLE OF THE ISLANDS

have always been protected by the sea, which is almost invariably rough, and by a thick tropical forest which extends without a break over more than a thousand square kilometres, unpenetrated by outsiders and almost impenetrable.

THE ARIOTO

The decline of the Andamanese began with the first landing of foreigners on the island and is similar to that of so many other primitive peoples who have come into contact with civilization; a detailed account of their decline would be long and pitiful. In the case of the Andamanese, however, demographic influences arising thousands of years ago must also be taken into account. Cut off by circumstances into small groups and separated at random by large expanses of sea or by the impenetrable forest, they gradually developed somatic and cultural differences of the greatest scientific interest. Among other things, languages became modified to such an extent that members of different groups are unable to understand one another. The Onges, for example, who in my opinion are the nearest relations of the Jarawas, are quite unable to understand their language.

The peoples of Great Andaman were the first to encounter civilization, when from 1838 onwards the Indian Government, then in English hands, decided to institute at Port Blair a penitentiary for the many political prisoners after the famous 1837 mutiny. Subsequently the government sent over convicts serving long or life sentences. The life of the deportees was atrocious during the first few years, owing to malaria and the absence of medical supplies. To the majority, therefore, deportation to the Andamans meant a death sentence. Even today the only large brick building in the Andamans and Nicobars is the penitentiary at Port Blair.

Before the building of the penitentiary the English had made several desultory expeditions to the Andamans, and even before then other foreigners had landed on the archipelago. It is known that Marco Polo, probably passing within sight of the archipelago in 1292, gave it the name of Angaman, and declared the inhabitants to be ferocious cannibals with dogs' heads. As a result, even the Asian pirates were for centuries afraid to land on the islands. The barbarous forays of Arab slave traders later awoke in the islanders

THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS

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648 a furious aversion to foreigners. This hatred has been rekindled during the last hundred years by a number of unfortunate incidents, but at one time the islanders were favourably disposed towards seafarers passing by, if we are to believe Niccolo dei Conti and Cesare Federici, fleeting visitors to the islands in 1440 and 1569. They both wrote of the peaceful native canoes that approached their ships, and this is confirmed by other travellers, like the Italians Fra Odorico da Pordenone in 1332 and Giovan Francesco Gemelli Caresi in 1709.

Violent clashes with the coastal tribes only became frequent when the English began to take an interest in the Andamans as a possible penal colony. The first prisoners to be sent there were some Indians, in 1788. In 1796 the colony was abolished owing to the swift death of nearly all the prisoners from tropical diseases. The attempt was repeated in 1838 after a mission entrusted to F. Mouat, and this time the seeds of decline for the islanders were sown. Efforts were begun to approach the coastal peoples, and even, strangely enough, those of the forests, the now ferocious Jarawas. Some of these tentative overtures were well received, but once the islanders came to think they had been betrayed it was enough to rekindle the hatred of strangers which they have retained ever since.

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[192] The evidence obtainable from archaeological excavations shows that for thousands of years the people encountered by the English in the coastal areas were the sole inhabitants of Great Andaman, living by fishing rather than by hunting or cultivation in the forests. The Jarawas arrived later. Migration from Little Andaman, imposed in relatively recent times by lack of food, brought them to Great Andaman. Since the entire coastal region was already occupied, the new arrivals took refuge in the forests of the hinterland. There they were happy, for they found an abundance of wild honey and fruit which amply fulfilled their needs. A spontaneous equilibrium was established between the coast-people and the forest-people, and both prospered.

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563. The arrival of an appreciable number of foreigners in 1838 immediately changed the situation. The peoples of the coast, who were the most anxious to make friends with the strangers, paid for this fatal error with virtual extermination. When the foreigners had definitely established themselves, the coastal Andamanese - Arioto

Arioto

THE PEOPLE OF THE ISLANDS

in the local language, as opposed to the people of the interior, the *Ereminga* - appear to have numbered between six and eight thousand. Over the years their place has been taken by more than thirteen thousand foreigners, most of whom were deportees, enjoying relative liberty as servants of government officials, farmers and foresters. The settlers, voluntarily or involuntarily, introduced the islanders to alcohol and tobacco, forcing them to turn to the foreigners in order to satisfy their craving. In the famous and extremely frank work of the English explorer M. V. Portman (*A History of our Relations with the Andamanese*, Calcutta, 1899) official letters are reproduced which give precise instructions in the matter to government officials. The result of these instructions was to transform the Arioto into alcohol and tobacco addicts. Syphilis was passed to the native women by the deportees, and from them to their men. When, a few years after the mass importation of prisoners, the government authorities became aware of the infection among the Arioto, not one of them had escaped. The miserable twenty-three survivors of the eight to nine thousand of a century ago show the ultimate result only too well, and their final extinction is imminent.

Before the advent of the new civilization, the Arioto had divided up into at least ten distinct communities, but without any true tribal organization. They respected a form of chief, chosen by tacit consent for his personal qualities rather than by name or by birth-right; but the chiefs acted merely as paternal advisers, to be respected in times of trouble, with no illusions of authority. No one commanded, and none obeyed: all were content to follow the whim of the moment, with no conception of social obligation.

When the foreigners arrived, there were five main groups of Arioto on North Andaman, the Cari, Chede, Cora, Jeru and Tabo. Another five groups were in South Andaman, the Balawa, Bea, Bogig-iab, Joi and Col. With the numerical decline of the Arioto, who had always been endogamous within their group, a tendency arose for the survivors to merge and inter-marry, so that the twenty-three alive today are in fact the result of the mixing of the northern and southern Arioto, and of these with Indians and Burmese. The chief of these twenty-three individuals is Loca, a name in itself an indication of this ethnic mixture. Loca means 'whiskers', and he himself has a moustache, whereas pure Negritos have no body or facial hair.

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Semang ANT

Andamans AZ2

Oceanic Negritos 05

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be wrong to assume that the Negritos are brachycephalic. He believes that the mixed Negrito peoples are brachycephalic; the less mixed, the lower their cephalic index (proportional relation between width and length of skull) and thus, the less brachycephalic. The cephalic index of the Semangs of the Malay Peninsula is given as only 78-79; therefore, these people are not brachycephalic but mesocephalic.

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Although the Mincopies of the Andaman Islands have been known for quite a long time, they have as yet not been sufficiently studied from an anthropological viewpoint. /103/ However, from the few data which are available, we may assume that the average height of a man is 148.3 centimeters and 139 for the average woman. The cephalic index has been calculated to be 82.5 (in the south) and 83.0 in the north. Thus the Mincopies appear to be clearly brachycephalic, although the dolichocephalic skull is definitely not lacking among them. Dixon, therefore, regards the Mincopies as a mainly brachycephalic Negrito-Palae-Alpine racial element, however with a slight admixture of the dolichocephalic Proto-Negroid type (Fig. 12).

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The Semangs, who are living in the Malay Peninsula, namely in North Perak, in Kedah, Rahman, Ranga and Kelantan, are somewhat taller than the Mincopies. Their average height has been measured to be 152.0 centimeters. (1)

1. However, Skeat and Blagden mention as average height of the Semangs 149.1 centimeters for men and 140.0 for women.